

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting

Thursday, November 13, 2014

11:00 a.m.

APPLES, 381 High Ridge Road

Council Members Present:

Deidre Costello Anspach	Director of Nursing and Dental Services, City of Stamford
Karen Feder	Director of Youth Services/ Birth to Three Representative - Abilis
Sheila Glenn	ROSCCO Agency – After School Network
Cindy Grafstein	Special Assistant to the Mayor – Mayor’s Designee
Emmanuella Lauture	Home Day Care Provider
Polly Morrow	Program Manager, Corporate Citizenship and Philanthropy
Dr. Polly Rauh	Board of Education
Ellen Reardon	Director, Stamford Museum and Nature Center Preschool
Michele Sabia	Former SPS Curriculum Associate for Early Childhood Education
Jason Shaplen	CEO, Inspirica
Caroline Ward	Youth Services Coordinator, Ferguson Library
Karen Wenz	Director, First Presbyterian Nursery School
Dr. Tamu Lucero	Assistant Superintendent Elementary School – SPS

Grant Recipients/Advisors/Guests:

Donna Arcuri	School Readiness Liaison
Patricia Behm	Instructional Coordinator
Karen Brennan	Director, Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative
Imelda D’Luc	Director, Head Start – CLC
Jennifer DeRubies	Curriculum Associate, Early Childhood Education – SPS
Lisa Filardi	Education Coordinator, CLC- Lathan Wider
Alicia Hoffnagel	Office Assistant, St. Clement Preschool
Marc Jaffe	Executive Director, CLC
Mary Jennings	Director, Early Childhood Development and Intervention
Penny Lehman	Director, Program Services- CLC
Pat Malloy	Instructional Coordinator
Christina Nelson	Policy Fellow, All Our Kin
Matt Quinones	Representative, Stamford Board of Representatives
Sue Rigano	Executive Director, SPEF
Sandra Saavedra	Care Coordinator, Child First
Margo Sandahl	Instructional Coordinator
Carol Sargent	Director, State Funded Programs – CLC
Dr. Debby Schreiner	Instructional Coordinator
Sherry Tarantino	Director, St. Clement Preschool
Nathalie Tocci	Care to Care Coordinator, Family Centers
Jill Tomas	Instructional Coordinator
Dori Walker	Instructional Coordinator
Anna Witkowski	Director, Child Day Care Program – CLC

I. Welcome & Introductions

Polly Morrow opened the meeting and thanked Mary Jennings and her staff at APPLES for hosting today's meeting. She then invited the group to introduce themselves as this was the first meeting of the year and we had new members joining us. Mary Jennings also welcomed the group and invited those interested to stay after for a tour of the school.

II. Approval of Minutes from June 2014 Meeting

The Council unanimously approved the minutes from the June meeting.

III. Representative Matt Quinones – Update on his proposal to require childcare facilities to file reports with the Superintendent of the Stamford Public Schools

Representative Matt Quinones described the ordinance in development by the Board of Reps. The ordinance is included here as Attachment A. It would require childcare facilities to file reports with the Superintendent of the Stamford Public Schools, with the goal of addressing the question of unmet need and using the data to build a case for applying for more School Readiness slots.

There was much discussion around the ordinance and it was agreed that more discussion and work is needed. A signup request was passed around for people interested in working with Representative Quinones on a small task force.

In brief, comments included:

- There is currently a state mandate, ED159, which requires childcare providers to give this same information to the state each year. Does the information on that form provide the same information we are looking for?
- More communication is needed with the Board of Education, as they are already in the process of collecting data – we simply do not have access to it.
- The Board of Reps feels there is a lack of transparency on where the data is, how it is collected, and how it is used and agrees better communication is needed. The ordinance is meant to start a discussion towards that.
- The School Readiness Council needs to address applying for more School Readiness slots and finding new providers to be part of the program.
- It is very hard to undo or revise an ordinance once it is approved. We should consider putting procedures into place instead of enacting legislation.
- This is an unfunded mandate that needs money to put behind the manpower it will take to do the work.
- There is a Public Hearing on this that should be postponed. A notice was put in the Stamford Advocate, but not enough people read the paper.

IV. School Readiness Provider Reports

Carol Sargent from Childcare Learning Centers, Sherry Tarantino from St. Clement Preschool, and Jennifer DeRuebis from APPLES each highlighted a few of their accomplishments from the provider reports, included here as Attachments B, C, and D.

Imelda D'Luc thanked Representative Quinones for his help in procuring the new fence for Maple Avenue. Thanks to his hard work, the children's area is much safer now.

V. School Readiness Liaison Update, Donna Arcuri

Donna Arcuri reported that she is hopeful to take all of the children that are participating in subsidized preschool programming in Stamford at APPLES, St. Clements, and Childcare Learning Centers to the Palace Theater on April 24 to see the Dinosaur Train show. She is working on the logistics and funding now.

She also noted that she is hopeful to recruit more providers for School Readiness slots this year. She is planning a workshop in January to educate providers on the steps and requirements necessary to apply.

Donna reported that all School Readiness Programs have had some new reporting requirements from the state. 1. ChartsACourse teacher registry has been updated and programs are required to update each site with very specific information for the new teaching requirement in 2015 and 2020. 2. All programs have been asked to participate in a Discontinuity Study through a new reporting requirement. This required much time filling out the required spread sheets with much required information for each student. The idea is these students will be followed into grade school. Donna thanked the providers for their hard work and timeliness.

VI. SECC Update -- Sue Rigano and Karen Brennan

Sue Rigano, Chair of the Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative, shared that much work was done over the summer around the creation of the Collaborative's Action Plan. The plan includes a number of focus areas and data points we hope to zero in on in the coming year. Our next step is to introduce the plan to the community during a Lunch and Learn in December.

Karen Brennan gave a brief overview of the Collaborative and its partners. She spoke of the close working relationship she has with Donna Arcuri and Mara Siladi in the efforts to move forward our work around early childhood. In sum:

- The Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative is a community partnership of over 40 organizations committed to improving the quality of life for all children. Our mission is to prepare all children birth through eight for a lifetime of learning by engaging families, fostering community, and advocating for resources and results. As stewards of early childhood, we aim to connect resources, highlight best practices, and drive the work being done in our community.
- The Collaborative is governed by a leadership team made up of representatives from the early childhood and business communities, and by smaller committees focused on the work outlined below. The day-to-day work of the Collaborative is driven by a part-time director who is an

employee of the United Way of Western Connecticut, the fiscal agent and a lead partner for the Collaborative.

- The Stamford School Readiness Council, as a leading partner of the SECC, is managed by the City of Stamford's School Readiness Liaison. The School Readiness Council oversees the State's School Readiness Program and helps connect the private preschools, local daycare facilities, and family and home child care providers who serve the children throughout the city.
- The Collaborative is committed to connecting stakeholders on the early childhood front and is the first step in Stamford's larger Cradle to Career (C2C) vision for every child. Currently, the United Way of Western Connecticut's C2C Project Manager is working to bring the STRIVE Cradle to Career model to Stamford. The STRIVE model is focused on collective impact – a single minded, resolute effort on the part of all community stakeholders to focus resources on a common agenda – closing the student achievement gap and improving educational outcomes for ALL children. The Collaborative, focusing on children birth to age 8, will be an instrumental part of the C2C efforts.

Karen also reported on the successful Early Childhood Fair, held at Chelsea Piers on Saturday, November 1. Despite the rain and it being the day after Halloween, we had a wonderful turnout and a great time was had by all. Providers report speaking to many parents and giving them program information. There were many free activities for children including face painting offered by the Girl Scouts, the Ferguson Library Bookmobile, Kids Draw Free, and lively entertainment. A HUGE thank you was offered to the many people in attendance at today's meeting for their participation before, during, and after the Fair.

Finally, Karen invited the group to visit the Collaborative's new web site at www.stamfordearlychildhoodcollaborative.org.

VII. Announcements

Because the meeting ran long, we did not take the time to invite announcements. Members were asked to send information to Donna that they want to share with Council membership. Polly did invite Jason Shaplen, CEO of Inspirica, to say a few words. He described his program and gave an overview of a new adolescent program they are hoping to start.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

**The next Council meeting will be held on Thursday, December 11
in the Mayor's Conference Room, Government Center**

Addendum A: Ordinance Proposed by Representative Matt Quinones

Draft 10/22/2014

ORDINANCE NUMBER ____ SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIRING CHILDCARE FACILITIES TO FILE REPORTS WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the City of Stamford currently has no mechanism by which to accurately determine the number of children attending pre-Kindergarten childcare facilities within the City or other pertinent information regarding the provision of pre-Kindergarten services in the City of Stamford; and

WHEREAS, the accurate reporting of the number of children attending pre-Kindergarten childcare facilities and other pertinent data will enable the City of Stamford

And the Board of Education to make informed policy decisions regarding the provision of pre-Kindergarten childcare services and other educational services; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that it is in the best interest of the City of Stamford to require the reporting of basic information pertaining to the children attending pre-Kindergarten childcare facilities to the Superintendent of Schools of the City of Stamford.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF STAMFORD THAT:

The Code of Ordinances of the City of Stamford is hereby amended by the addition of the following to be codified as a new chapter.

I. Reporting Requirement.

Effective January 1, 2015, each “child day care center,” “group day care home,” and “family day care home,” as defined in Chapter 368a of the Connecticut General Statutes, as it may be amended from time to time, located within the City of Stamford shall file annually, on or before July 1 , with the Superintendent of the Stamford Public Schools a report containing the following information regarding the children enrolled in such facility, which information shall not personally identify any child:

- a) year of birth;
- b) ethnicity;
- c) whether or not the child receives subsidized tuition;
- d) whether or not the child resides in Stamford;
- e) Number of students on a waiting list, as of the date of the report.

This ordinance shall take effect upon enactment.

Addendum B: APPLES Monthly Report, October 2014

- **Program Utilization:**
 - a. Authorized Capacity: 15 School Day, School Year slots
 - b. Ages: 4 year olds
 - c. Students with disabilities: 1 child with special needs
- **Program Attendance:**
 - a. Illness: Attendance was consistent this month.
 - b. Notes and trends: 2 child moved to another CLC
- **Staffing:**
 - a. Staffing is in place.
- **Training:**
 - a. Julie Coakley, C.E.S. Early Childhood Coordinator presented a workshop on planning with CTEDLS and Observing and documenting children's work in the CTEDL on August 27th and 28th.
 - b. (2-3) Monthly meetings involving training on: NAEYC Accreditation and CTEDLS
- **Special Events/Activities:**
 - a. The Ferguson Library Bookmobile visited this month. Children enjoyed story time and finger puppets.
 - b. Students participate in weekly enrichment activities including programs from Bartlett Arboretum, Bricks and Motors, Yoga and Animal Embassy.
 - c. Students participate in weekly cooking experiences.
 - d. Class website launched
 - e. Monthly newsletter distributed to parents
 - f. Virtual classroom field trip taken

Addendum C: Childcare Learning Centers Monthly Report, September 2014

- **Program Utilization:**

- a. Authorized Capacity – 337 – Full Day; 97 – Part Day; 60- Extended Day
- b. Attended – 491
- c. Ages – 250- 3 year olds, 241 - 4 year olds, 0 - 5 year olds
- d. Children with disabilities - 14 with LEA- IEP; 2 without LEA-IEP
- e. Notes and Trends: Down 3 Part Day slots. Many of the families enrolled in Part Day were relocated at the beginning of the year. We also had many families wanting full day after they enrolled in the Part Day Program.

- **Program Attendance:**

- a. 100% of enrollment
- b. Notes and trends:

- **Staffing:**

Open Positions-

- a. Cluster A – Assistant Teacher
- b. Cluster A - 2 Teachers
- c. Cluster D – Assistant Teacher
- d. Recruitment – ads on-line, local newspapers, postings at NCC.

- **Training:**

- a. Medication/Epipen – September 18 and 25
- b. Yale Training – September 10
- c. Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum- Sept 24

- **Special Events/Activities:**

- a. Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children. LEP Themes: Camping, Beach, Picnics, Gross Motor Activities
- b. Bookmobile – September 10 and 24
- c. Clemente Fund Raisers began- September 8, ends September 29
- d. School Photos – September 18 and 19
- e. Lunch and Learn, “ Access Health CT” – September 18
- f. New Parent Orientation – Lathon Wider- September 30
- g. Lathon Wider License received September 30, Open for children October 1

Addendum D: St. Clements Monthly Report, October 2014

- **Program Utilization:**

- a. School Day – School Year – 42 Students to date
- b. Pre – K 3 Class – 18
- c. Pre – K 4 Class #1-12
- d. Pre – K 4 Class #2-12
- e. 30 School Readiness slots are taken, leaving 1 slot for incoming student
- f. Continuing tours each day. We currently have several applications out with promises of returning to register.

- **Attendance:**

- a. 98% attendance. A few children still traveling with families. Will start school upon return.

- **Staffing:**

- a. We are fully staffed! 3 Head Teacher's, 3 Teacher Assistant's
- b. New Office Assistant – Alicia Hoffnagle
- c. 2 new staff members – Jessica Repik – Head Teacher – Pre-K 4 and Kathleen Johnston – Teacher Asst. Pre-K 3
- d. 100% attendance

- **Activities & Events:**

- a. All SCP Staff members received all day training in Diversity and Literacy at the first staff meeting of the year.
- b. Tuesday, September 2 was our first day of school. Our first week of school had a scheduled transition period for students.
- c. Thursday, September 11th, SCP hosted a Parent Orientation. Parents were treated to a host of desserts, received their Parent Handbooks and visited their child's classrooms for a Q & A with the classroom teachers. Poster's, Lesson Plans and displayed curriculum and standard resources for families to look at. Families were also introduced to the new CTEDLS that will now be implemented into the classroom.
- d. Our After School Program started on Monday, September 22nd. We host approximately 15 children per afternoon.
- e. Our city nurse, Helen Donner came in twice to check the Health forms for proper immunizations, current dates and physician's signatures. SCP is in complete compliance with the state.